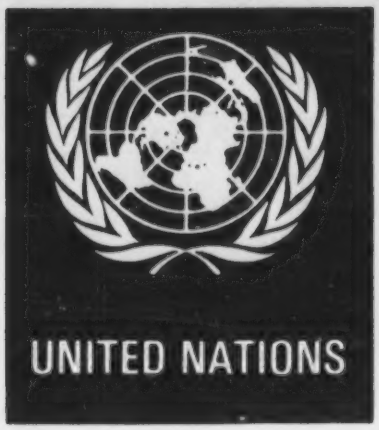

DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

October 1992

Volume XV, Bulletin No. 10

CONTENTS

		Page
I.	ACTION TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE ..	1
II.	CONCLUSIONS OF REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES	3
III.	INVITATION EXTENDED TO THE UNITED NATIONS TO ATTEND, AS PARTICIPANT, WORKING GROUPS ON MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL ISSUES	19
IV.	UNRWA COMMISSIONER-GENERAL REPORTS TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY	20
V.	FIFTH EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS, HELD AT ISTANBUL ON 17 AND 18 JUNE 1992, ADOPTS RESOLUTION ON THE CAUSE OF PALESTINE	25
VI.	INTERNATIONAL ENCOUNTER FOR EUROPEAN JOURNALISTS ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE HELD AT LISBON ON 16 AND 17 SEPTEMBER 1992	31
VIII.	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION	33

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I. ACTION TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

On 9 October 1992, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (A/47/522-S/24648), the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People stated the following:

> "In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I wish to draw your urgent attention to the ongoing hunger strike by Palestinian prisoners to protest against ill-treatment and the deterioration of their conditions of detention.
>
> "According to a press release by the Palestine Human Rights Information Centre of 10 October 1992, as well as reports in The New York Times of 3 October and The Times (London) of 7 October, at least 3,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli central prisons - Jneid, Nablus, Ashkelon, Bir Saba' and Nafha - are continuing an open hunger strike, which began on 27 September.
>
> "It was reported that the prisoners began the strike after having exhausted all other measures of negotiations without success. They are demanding an end to the policy of long periods of solitary confinement and other arbitrary individual and collective punishments; the closure of special underground punishment sections where dungeon conditions prevail; a reinstatement of adequate food rations; a halt to overcrowding; access to proper medical treatment; and an end to beatings and tear-gassing in the cells and to demeaning strip searches.
>
> "The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, in its annual reports to the General Assembly, as well as through the Chairman's letters, has repeatedly drawn attention to the inhuman conditions of detention of Palestinians in Israeli prisons, including beatings and torture during interrogation, in violation of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, and international human rights standards. The Committee is seriously concerned at the reported increase during the past year in the harsh and repressive treatment of prisoners, and the further deterioration in their conditions of detention,

including reductions in food rations, denial of family visits and the growing use of solitary confinement.

" The Committee further wishes to draw attention to the fact that, according to the above-mentioned press release, an estimated 12,500 Palestinians are currently being held in Israeli detention centres and prisons, most of them operated by the army and military police. Up to 1,000 more may be held under short detention orders and not registered in detention centres or police lock-ups.

"The Committee deplores that the Israeli authorities have so far refused to address the legitimate grievances of the prisoners, treating them as a security problem, rather than as a human rights issue. The Committee is gravely concerned that support demonstrations have been suppressed with live ammunition and rubber bullets, resulting in at least 90 Palestinians being shot and injured in the Gaza Strip, as reported by The New York Times on 8 October.

"On behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I once again appeal to you as well as to all those concerned, in particular the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention, to take all the necessary measures to ensure that Israel desist forthwith from using illegal methods in treating the Palestinian detainees and respect its international obligations under the Convention and relevant human rights instruments, as well as Security Council resolutions."

II. CONCLUSIONS OF REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

The Special Committee issued its twenty-fourth report to the Secretary-General for submission to the General assembly at its forty-seventh session (A/47/509).

The report includes the following conclusions:

"786. The following conclusions have been formulated on the basis of the information reflected in the two periodic reports and in the present report of the Special Committee and have been prepared in accordance with the mandate of the Special Committee under the terms of General Assembly resolution 46/47. Since the twenty-third report was adopted on 22 August 1991, the conclusions thus cover the period from 23 August 1991 to 26 August 1992. The two periodic reports cover the period from 23 August to 30 November 1991 (A/47/76) and from 1 December 1991 to 29 February 1992 (A/47/262), respectively, while the present report concerns the period from 1 March to 26 August 1992.

"787. It ought to be borne in mind that the unchanged frequency and intensity of incidents that occurred during the period under consideration and the impressive amount of information on the human rights situation received and examined by the Special Committee did not permit its total reflection in these reports; the Special Committee has endeavoured, within the constraints imposed by the regulations with regard to the length of United Nations documents, to include in its reports, as faithfully as possible, samples of the information it has received in order to illustrate in the best possible manner the situation of human rights in the occupied territories during the period covered by these reports.

"788. Since its establishment in 1968, the Special Committee has repeatedly attempted to secure the cooperation of the Government of Israel but has consistently been denied such cooperation. During the period relevant to the present report, the Committee has once again addressed a letter to the Secretary-General seeking his intervention in order to convince the Israeli authorities to cooperate. However, it should be noted that the aforementioned letter remains without response.

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"789. Nevertheless, the Special Committee has benefited from the cooperation of the Governments of Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, and of various Palestinian representatives. As it has been precluded from visiting the occupied territories, the Special Committee has conducted, in addition to its regular meetings at Geneva, a series of meetings at Damascus, Amman and Cairo, where it travelled in April and May 1992. It heard the evidence of persons with first-hand knowledge and personal experience of the human rights situation in the occupied territories, in addition to following the situation in the occupied territories on a day-to-day basis through reports appearing in the Israeli press and the Arab press published in the occupied territories. The Special Committee also examined a number of valuable communications and reports from Governments, organizations and individuals concerning the occupied territories that reached it during the period under review.

"790. The human rights situation of Palestinians and other Arabs in the occupied territories remains a matter of utmost concern for the Special Committee in view of the continuing repression of the popular uprising by the Israeli authorities, the arbitrariness in the administration of justice when it concerns the Palestinian and other Arab population of the territories and the measures of collective punishment, which entail serious social, economic and educational consequences.

"791. As it has stressed since the outset of its activities, the Special Committee considers that the overall hardships faced by the population of the occupied territories derive from the fact that occupation itself constitutes a violation of human rights. Israel has continued to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied territories in violation of its obligations as a State party to the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which stipulates that military occupation is to be considered a temporary, de facto situation giving no right whatsoever to the occupying Power over the territorial integrity of the occupied territories. However, Israel does not recognize the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to these territories but has asserted that it applies most of its provisions in practice for humanitarian reasons and has continued to claim that certain territories it has occupied since 1967 constitute a part of the State of Israel, a claim that has been refuted unanimously by the international community.

"792. The policy Israel has pursued in this regard has led to a further intensification of settlement activity through the expropriation of land and the transfer of Israeli citizens, particularly of recent Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe and the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to the

occupied territories. These and related measures such as the diversion of water resources, the uprooting of olive and citrus trees, the destruction of fields, the expropriation of land used for grazing, the excessive use of pesticides and other chemicals that modify the environment, declaring land as belonging to the State and the proclamation of closed military zones would appear to indicate a will to modify the demographic composition of the occupied territories by inducing Palestinians and the other Arab population of the territories to leave their homeland. In addition, persons with personal experience of the situation in the territories have informed the Special Committee that settlements are often built between Arab villages so that contact among them would be cut off. The most recent evidence that has come before the Special Committee shows that the Israeli authorities are creating a new infrastructure of roads and highways linking the settlements but bypassing Palestinian towns and villages. Ha'aretz reported on 6 May 1992 that some $10.5 million was being transferred from the Housing Ministry's regular budget for roads to a parallel budget for roads that are paved for security reasons.

"793. Various illustrations of the Israeli settlement policy are to be found in the reports of the Special Committee such as the information that appeared in Ha'aretz on 12 September 1991 that the rate of settlement development in the territories was at that time three times higher than the rate that had been announced by Mr. Sharon while he was Minister of Housing. The Jerusalem Post reported on 22 October that the IDF had expropriated 100,000 dunums of land between Ramallah and the Jordan Valley owned by five Arab villages. Other Israeli press reports quoted statements by the Central Bureau of Statistics made on 5 April 1992 according to which the number of building starts in the territories had quadrupled during 1991, while building starts country-wide had doubled. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 6 April 1992; Al-Fajr, 13 April 1992)

"794. The Special Committee took note with interest of a number of statements concerning changes in the settlement policy made by the newly elected Government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. In his first press conference following the Labour Party's election victory, as reported on 25 June 1992 in the Jerusalem Post, Prime Minister Rabin suggested a shift in budget allocation away from settlements, but ruled out a complete freeze. He also made a clear distinction between "political" and "security" settlements. On 18 June 1992, the same newspaper announced the imminent launching of a major campaign to attract more residents to the Golan Heights following earlier declarations by the former Prime Minister Shamir and Mr. Rabin that the region would be kept by Israel because of its strategic importance. The Jerusalem Post reported on 15 July 1992 that the new Housing Minister had indicated that the Government might establish new "security" settlements in the Golan Heights and the Jordan Valley, defining them as "any settlement along the border that had a direct connection with stopping forces or an attack, and whose residents were organized in a manner as to be able to defend the sector".

"795. On the other hand, it was reported that two controversial East Jerusalem Jewish housing projects in the city's Arab neighbourhood, which would have included over 200 housing units, were halted. (Jerusalem Post, 1, 3, and

7-10 July 1992) In a first attempt to reallocate resources away from the territories, the Government was reported to have imposed a de facto freeze on all new public housing construction throughout the country. The Finance and Housing Ministers released a joint statement declaring that "all unsigned building contracts were to be frozen immediately throughout the country, including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip". (Ha'aretz, 16 July 1992; Jerusalem Post, 17 July 1992) In its first session on 19 July 1992, the cabinet voted that "the establishment of settlements approved by previous Governments could only be carried out with the re-approval of the present Government". (Jerusalem Post, 20 July 1992; Ha'aretz, 21 July 1992) In addition, the Finance and Housing Ministers ordered the cancellation of construction work on nearly 7,000 new housing units in the territories, including almost a dozen highways. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 24 July 1992) On 27 July 1992, the Prime Minister gave his final approval to a plan that called for the halting of the construction of 5,364 homes in the territories and 6,617 homes that were planned to be built inside the Green Line. (Jerusalem Post, 28 July 1992)

"796. At another level, concerning the situation of human rights, the resistance of Palestinian and other Arab civilians against the occupation has continued. The Israeli authorities have so far continued to quell the resistance as well as the popular uprising, which is currently in its fifth year, implementing harsh repressive measures against the population of the occupied territories, without taking into account the necessity or applying them with the proportionality warranted by the offence. Several witnesses who have testified before the Special Committee have confirmed the broad application of the new instructions that had been issued to soldiers and civilians in the territories concerning rules for opening fire, which have resulted in a rise in the number of deaths among the population. In May 1992, one witness stated in this regard:

> 'It is important to note here that Israeli open fire regulations are not officially published, as they are considered classified information. None the less, whether one is talking about undercover units or regular uniformed security personnel, the portions of the oral and written regulations that have been unofficially made public allow the use of lethal force as 'a last resort' against Palestinians suspected of having committed or attempting to commit a wide range of activities deemed illegal by Israeli military orders and regulations. These activities include being a fleeing 'suspect', writing graffiti, throwing stones, raising a Palestinian flag, and wearing a keffiyeh around one's face. The regulations were relaxed even more at the beginning of 1992 in order to allow for the shooting of any person considered to be armed, and armed is defined in many ways.' (See para. 88 above.)

"797. The disproportionate use of force against civilians often consists of the utilization of live ammunition and other cruel means of inflicting heavy loss of life and causing severe and widespread injuries, which usually occur during clashes of the civilian population with the army or Border Policemen, army raids, demonstrations or clashes with settlers.

"798. In addition, the number of persons who are said to have been killed in unclear circumstances, often as a result of being ambushed, has continued to grow. It is difficult to determine with certainty the cause of these killings. The violence and indiscriminate repression has affected all age groups, including very young children, women and the elderly, and has resulted in a climate of fear, tension and suspicion among the population of the territories.

"799. A preoccupying development already brought to the attention of the Special Committee is the increasing use of "undercover" units to infiltrate the population and carry out "death squad" killings. During the fourth yea. of the uprising, between 8 December 1990 and 7 December 1991, 34 Palestinians are reported to have been killed by undercover units. During the first four months of the fifth year of the uprising, between 8 December 1991 and 8 April 1992, 20 Palestinians were killed by such units. In the course of testimonies the Special Committee has heard recently, one witness stated:

> 'These units are composed of IDF troops, border guards and Shin Beth operatives. ... One of the tasks of these units is to work among the Palestinian population in order to identify and target those defined as 'activists'. During the fourth year of the uprising and the first four months of the fifth year of the uprising, it is clear that another task of these undercover units is to assassinate.' (See para. 83 above.)

"800. A second disquieting development brought to the Special Committee's attention is the continued increase in the number of casualties among children in the territories, in addition to the tens of thousands of children who have been wounded or maimed since the beginning of the popular uprising. Deaths of children usually occur during stone-throwing incidents and demonstrations. However, many of those killed were not involved in any violent action other than writing graffiti, being bystanders at demonstrations or clashes or simply walking to school. A witness stated to that effect:

> 'Forty-four of the 117 Palestinians killed in the fourth year of the uprising, or 37.6 per cent, were children. ... In terms of children, in the first four years of the intifadah, approximately 33 per cent of the 1,015 Palestinians killed were 17 years old or under. ... The fourth year of the intifadah was significant in that, although there was a decrease in the total number killed as compared to the previous year, the percentage of children killed rose from 31.6 per cent in the third year to 37.6 per cent last year. The largest percentage of these children, 26.5 per cent of the total number killed in the fourth year, were between 11 and 16 years of age.' (See para. 94 above.)

"801. During the period under review, serious shortcomings have continued to be observed in the area of the administration of justice, which has been transferred increasingly to the competence of military courts. The Special Committee was informed recently that this practice has been extended in the

occupied territories to include even traffic offences. The number of Arab civilians in detention, including administrative detention, continues to be very high and is the consequence of the policy of "quick justice" implemented by the authorities. According to a report transmitted by Amnesty International in September 1991, more than 14,000 Palestinians had spent some time in administrative detention since the beginning of the popular uprising.

"802. Proceedings before courts have been described on the whole as summary and arbitrary and as denying the basic legal safeguards, including the right to a fair trial. As the Special Committee has already had the occasion to point out, this situation was aggravated on 26 June 1991 when the law on military courts in the territories was amended, permitting a single-justice bench to impose prison sentences of up to 10 years. Since the outbreak of the uprising, administrative detention, which has often turned out to be arbitrary, has continued to be imposed for excessive periods. This has been attributed, inter alia, to bureaucratic delays owing to the very large numbers of persons concerned and the commensurate lack of personnel to deal with the files. Most defendants continue to be imprisoned for the entire duration of the legal proceedings.

"803. Several witnesses who testified before the Special Committee indicated that extracting confessions under duress was common practice. Members of detainees' families have also been detained arbitrarily in order to exert psychological pressure on them and this has included pregnant women and women with small children. No contact with the legal counsel was permitted during the entire interrogation period, which could last several months. Lawyers have complained about the difficulties encountered in gaining access to their clients' files as well as the procedural obstacles to which they were subjected during the trials. One example of this practice was reported by Ha'aretz on 21 and 22 July 1992 when the Nablus Military Court sentenced two defendants in the absence of their lawyers. It also stated that Justice Minister David Libar expressed his surprise that the Nablus Military Court would sentence defendants who were not represented by their lawyers, which is contrary to international law and the principles of justice. A number of lawyers are said to have been attacked physically by security guards in the courthouses. One witness who testified before the Special Committee described a case in which he was involved personally:

> 'The policeman attacked him. Another colleague intervened in order to put a distance between the other lawyer and the policeman. I also tried to release my colleague from the clutches of the policeman, but the policeman pushed me. He also tried to hit two of the young lawyers there. He tore the tie of one of them. In other words, this was a physical attack on the three of us. The other two lawyers were actually beaten quite severely, whereas, as far as I was concerned, I was only pushed, but not hit. ... What upset me particularly was that the security people of the court and the military officers did not intervene to put an end to this attack against us.' (See para. 284 above.)

"804. In addition, the relatives of arrested persons are systematically subjected to economic and psychological pressures such as the denial or cancellation of work and travel permits. Lawyers and families are often not notified of the place of incarceration or about the transfer of prisoners from one detention centre to another.

"805. The Special Committee continues to be concerned by the pronounced contrast between the severity of the sentences imposed upon the Arab population, which are often disproportionate to the offence with which they are charged, and the leniency from which Israeli citizens have continued to benefit, even when they are charged with the killing or ill-treatment of Arab civilians, in flagrant violation of the fundamental right of all persons to equality before the courts and tribunals. An example of such practice was reported in Ha'aretz on 3 September 1991 when the Ramallah Military Court sentenced three members of the Islamic Jihad movement to 15 years of imprisonment for the attempted kidnapping of a soldier. On the other hand, the IDF commander for the Gaza Strip suspended a second lieutenant following an incident during which a 10-year-old youth died in the Shati' Camp. (Ha'aretz, 10 October 1991) Al-Fajr reported on 16 December 1991 that a 14-year-old youth had been sentenced to seven years in prison for membership in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine while a resident of Beit Lahiya, Khalil Hamdouneh, was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment by the Beer Sheba Military Court for allegedly hitting two Israelis with a hammer. (Al-Fajr, 13 January 1992) In contrast, the Southern Region Military Court acquitted an IDF captain who had been accused of beating, kicking and hitting an Arab lawyer with his rifle butt during a trial in the Gaza Military Court. The Court ruled that the lawyer had exaggerated the gravity of the blows and that the officer had acted in conformity with his authority under the existing regulations, as the person in charge of preventing disorder. (Ha'aretz, 10 January 1992)

"806. An additional grave deficiency in the administration of justice is the practice of dual punishment imposed on Palestinians whose houses have been demolished in addition to receiving harsh sentences. Such measures of collective punishment also affect the innocent members of the family or relatives of the detainee and are prohibited by the Fourth Geneva Convention.

"807. During the period under consideration, the situation of detainees has continued to be critical and remains a source of serious preoccupation for the Special Committee. The number of Palestinian and other Arab civilians in detention, which had increased significantly since the beginning of the popular uprising, continues to be very high. According to the estimates of the Palestinian Human Rights Information Centre, over 120,000 persons have been arrested and held for over 24 hours since the beginning of the uprising. In 1991 alone, the Centre believes that over 20,000 Palestinians were arrested and held for over 24 hours. From the testimonies it has heard recently, the Committee has noted a further deterioration in the status and treatment of prisoners, which is characterized by systematic torture and both physical and psychological ill-treatment, such as deprivation of food and sleep, being tied up in painful positions and in extremely reduced spaces. Such practices have

often resulted in severe injuries, permanent incapacitation and even death. Prisoners have also been threatened with harm to family members who have on occasion been interrogated and subjected to intimidation, even when this concerned pregnant women and wives with very small children who were present during the entire questioning.

"808. An example of such practices is the death of Mustafa Akkawi, aged 33, in the GSS ward at Hebron Prison on 4 February 1992. When he was brought before Judge Knobler at the Hebron Military Court on 3 February 1992, Akkawi is reported to have complained that he had been beaten during interrogation and showed the judge bruises and blue marks on the upper part of his body. A witness stated the following in connection with the case of Mustafa Akkawi:

> 'In his last 10 hours of life, according to Israeli interrogators, he spent seven and a half hours in a corridor where the temperature was 0°C, handcuffed and hooded, and two hours in what Israeli officials described as 'friendly interrogation'. The important issue, I think, with regard to Mr. Akkawi is that the Israeli authorities admitted that he was subjected to standard treatment. This standard treatment included beatings, sleep deprivation, forced postures, confinement in a tiny cell and exposure to extreme cold.' (See para. 636 above.)

"809. Despite the official version of the results of the autopsy stating that Mr. Akkawi had died of cardiac arteriosclerosis , a New York pathologist, Dr. Michael Baden, who also participated in the autopsy, indicated that Akkawi had "died of a heart attack precipitated by the emotional pressure, physical exertion and freezing temperature he was forced to withstand, along with a lack of proper medical care".'

"810. According to the human rights group Betzelem, since the beginning of the uprising, five Palestinians have died as a result of torture during interrogation, while two committed suicide shortly after interrogation. (Ha'aretz, 5-7 and 9-13 February 1992; Jerusalem Post, 6, 9, 12-14 and 18 February 1992; Al-Fajr, 10 February 1992) A witness testifying before the Special Committee described other torture practices used in Israeli detention centres:

> 'One night, they took me for questioning, my hands cuffed behind me. The cuffs are made of plastic. Every time I moved, it used to pull and tear at my arms. They tied my hands to something in the ceiling and started beating me. I stayed hung up like that from the ceiling and was beaten for three hours. Following that, they tied my hands behind my back once again and beat me with an iron chain, on the shoulders, on my left arm and my left hand, until I felt very great pain and it was all swollen. I told them, but they did not listen to me. The day after, I did not feel my left hand any more. ... I have a report stating that my left hand is 100 per cent paralysed.' (See para. 650 above.)

"811. A particularly disquieting development brought to the attention of the Special Committee was the alleged use of electric shock torture on prisoners

during interrogation. The Jerusalem Post reported on 15 March 1992 that allegations concerning this practice had first been made by the Palestinian Human Rights Information Centre in December 1991. It was stated that a report that appeared in the Hadashot newspaper in February 1991 quoted police sources as saying that the claims about the use of electric shocks were substantially correct and that a special unit had been operating to that effect in several prisons in order to extract information from stone-throwers. It was also indicated that the Al-Haq human rights group based in Ramallah had stated it had evidence concerning several cases in which electric shock had been used. In this connection, a witness stated:

> 'An important issue in addition to the use of electric shock by interrogators is the complicity of both the medical doctors and other medical workers in the detention centres, as well as of the legal system. Several detainees made complaints to prison doctors and paramedics regarding their treatment. The response was completely inadequate. Detainees were told that they would get better. Several were given aspirin as a result. One person was taken to hospital because of his medical condition and was later returned to interrogation.' (See para. 636 above.)

"812. A matter of deep concern for the Special Committee is that minors have continued to be detained and tortured, although Israel has ratified the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The Committee has received evidence that even children aged 12 have been arrested, beaten and tortured for several days at a time. Referring to the experiences of his son, who has been arrested and detained on four separate occasions, the father of a minor who appeared before the Special Committee stated:

> 'He became different, both physically and psychologically, and had some unexpected reactions to things. He would get very angry and frustrated, after his prison experiences. He could be calm and nice and then would have a sudden outburst. When he had been in prison, and kept in isolation, two young girls broke into his cell and touched him (sexually), incited him to smoke, etc. He cried out and ended up beating the girls. Immediately after that, he was beaten by the guards for this. Therefore, at home, after these experiences, he would also awake in the middle of the night and suffer from insomnia.' (See para. 272 above.)

"813. In a press release issued on 21 May 1992, the International Committee of the Red Cross stated its position on the treatment of Palestinian detainees under interrogation. It "called upon the Israeli Government to put an immediate end to the ill-treatment inflicted during interrogation on detainees from the occupied territories", adding that "confessions obtained under duress moreover preclude any fair trial". The Committee has "in particular urged the authorities to prohibit all forms of ill-treatment, including insults and threats, to forbid interrogation by co-detainees and the exertion of pressure to induce detainees to collaborate, to improve the material conditions of

detention and to limit to the strict minimum the time detainees have to spend in interrogation sections".

"814. Contrary to the provisions of article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, detainees have continued to be held in prisons and detention centres inside Israel itself such as Ketziot, located in the Negev desert, where the prevailing conditions have been described as particularly harsh throughout the year. According to witnesses who have testified before the Special Committee, even the family and relatives, for whom it is very difficult to visit detainees at such prisons because of their distance from the occupied territories, spent most of the time allotted for visits in queues and were subjected to lengthy and detailed body searches. An additional difficulty for relatives as well as lawyers is keeping track of a prisoner's whereabouts owing to frequent unannounced transfers of detainees to different prisons. The physical conditions to which the prisoners are subjected during transfers have been described as being particularly harsh, with the prisoners' hands constantly tied behind their backs with plastic strings or plastic handcuffs, which are said to be particularly painful and cause injuries and swelling.

"815. In addition, conditions of detention have been described as inadequate in terms of facilities, food, clothing and the availability of medical services. Prisoners are said to be given daily food rations of only 1,400 calories. Owing to the insufficient food intake, prisoners are exposed to disease, while many are reported to have died of deliberate medical negligence. The Special Committee was informed of the outbreak of scabies in prisons on several occasions. The overcrowding of cells has continued, and a lack of ventilation and humidity in the cells has also been reported. Witnesses have reported that when prisoners have protested against their conditions of detention, the prison authorities have reacted violently. An incident has been reported that involved the throwing of tear-gas canisters inside the cells, after which 800 prisoners had to undergo medical treatment.

"816. The Special Committee has observed that acts of harassment against the civilian population of the occupied territories have continued. One example is the excessively time-consuming and rigid procedure the inhabitants of the occupied territories are required to fulfil in order to obtain administrative authorizations and documents such as a driver's licence or a birth certificate. Numerous witnesses have described the treatment they have been subjected to when leaving or entering the occupied territories, as well as incidents when soldiers and members of the security forces have forcibly entered into houses, attacked the occupants and destroyed their property. One witness provided the following example:

> 'They took my father out of the house. His car was parked outside and the soldiers started firing rubber bullets at the windscreen until it was completely smashed. They went away for a while and then came back. They caught our neighbour, who had gone shopping, and his son. They caught him, and beat him. He was bleeding and the soldiers were jumping on his belly.' (See para. 362 above.)

"817. According to the testimonies the Committee has heard recently, settlers have been involved in numerous incidents of this type. On several occasions, settlers have raided villages and refugee camps, attacking the inhabitants and destroying their property and have often uprooted trees. It has been reported that the Israeli armed forces were not always able to control such outbursts of violence and aggression against Palestinians and other Arabs, which have only compounded the climate of tension and fear prevailing in the occupied territories. Several witnesses have described a widespread practice that consisted of posing as hitchhikers and subsequently attacking the persons in the vehicle that would pick them up and stealing or severely damaging it.

"818. During the period under review, the Special Committee has observed a continuation in the implementation of measures of collective punishment in the occupied territories, in violation of the relevant provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Houses built without the necessary permits and in particular those belonging to detainees have been demolished, leaving their often numerous family and relatives in an extremely precarious position. The Special Committee was informed that, on occasion, the Israeli authorities made the occupants themselves pay for the bulldozers carrying out the demolition. This has been compounded by the uprooting of olive and citrus fruit trees. A practice that has also seriously affected the economic as well as the health situation of the population of the occupied territories is the continued imposition of prolonged curfews on numerous towns and villages, on occasion for several days at a time. In addition to the already severe restrictions concerning entry into Israel, this measure has deprived numerous families of their means of livelihood, bringing them to the threshold of the poverty line.

"819. Numerous witnesses who have testified before the Special Committee during its recent mission of inquiry have spoken about the untenable situation with regard to the Government of Israel's taxation policy in the occupied territories, which imposes extremely heavy taxes on the income of the Palestinian and other Arab population and has led to the bankruptcy or closing of many enterprises and businesses. This policy has been illustrated in the following manner:

> 'The tax on income is not compatible with the situation of the Palestinian citizens in the occupied territories, but in spite of this, it is higher in percentage than the tax on Israeli income. The income of the Israeli citizens is five times the income of the Palestinians in the occupied territories. Nevertheless the exemption amount for Israeli citizens is five times the amount of exemption for the citizens in the occupied territories. Let me clarify. If the income of an Israeli citizen is, let us say, 15,000 shekels per year, he is exempt from taxation. But a Palestinian citizen, living under occupation, pays income tax if he earns by one shekel more than 3,000 shekels a year.' (See para. 483 above.)

"820. During the reporting period, the Special Committee has noted a continuation in the issuing of deportations orders for alleged security reasons against the inhabitants of the occupied territories, in violation of article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Despite repeated international protests, the cases of 11 persons who were slated for deportation at the beginning of this year are still pending before the High Court of Justice. The recently introduced practice of "conditional banishment" of persons alleged to be leading activists of the uprising has continued. An example is the expulsion to Jordan on 17 July 1992 of six Palestinian students, following the five-day siege of Al-Najah National University in Nablus. In addition, the Israeli authorities have continued to expel Palestinians and other Arabs without a valid "staying visa", which often concerns the non-resident wives and children of inhabitants of the occupied territories. The status of these persons may have very serious repercussions since persons with no identity or residence documents, including small children, are said to not be admitted to hospital, even in case of an emergency. A number of witnesses have informed the Special Committee that not being in the occupied territories at the time of a census has deprived them of the necessary documents. This situation has been aggravated after the Persian Gulf war when numerous Palestinians were compelled to leave the region. Family reunion has been impeded if they had lived abroad for a long time, if they were married abroad and if their children were born in foreign countries. A mother who testified before the Special Committee described the sometimes dramatic circumstances under which a deportation takes place:

> 'Three hours after the delivery of my daughter, the army invaded the hospital. I was put in a military jeep, with my two daughters, and thrown out of the country through the bridge.' (See para. 469 above.)

"821. The Special Committee has noted with interest the information that no decisions will be taken concerning deportations orders that have been issued against Palestinians and other Arabs from the occupied territories and that the Government of Israel is reconsidering the usefulness of this practice.

"822. According to the evidence that has come before the Special Committee, the enjoyment of certain fundamental freedoms by the inhabitants of the occupied territories has continued to be restricted. In addition to the widespread imposition of curfews, which restrict the freedom of movement, the Israeli authorities have continued to issue green identity cards to persons who are perceived as a threat to security and are thus prevented from entering Israel and East Jerusalem. These cards are systematically issued to former detainees or persons against whom administrative detention orders have been issued and have resulted in entire families being deprived of their means of livelihood.

"823. On 28 October 1991, Ha'aretz and Jerusalem Post reported that three advisers to the Palestinian delegation at the Madrid peace conference were prohibited from leaving the occupied territories because they had been convicted of security offences. On 30 December 1991, Al-Fajr reported that the Israeli Commander of the Central Region had signed order C 91-2, which stipulates that the inhabitants of the territories must receive official

permits from the authorities to cultivate their land or graze livestock on it. Ha'aretz and Jerusalem Post reported on 15 December that as at 14 December 1991 the movement of Arab residents was restricted to a distance of 150 metres away from the main roads on each side during the night hours from 5 p.m. to 6 a.m. The roadsides would be declared closed military areas. Such restrictions have also affected the freedom of education when students from Gaza were informed that they would need permits in order to stay at the UNRWA vocational centre in Ramallah. Some students are said to have been arrested for lack of such permits by soldiers in the West Bank. (Al-Tali'ah, 13 February 1992; Al-Fajr, 17 February 1992)

"824. An additional example of the severe restriction of the freedom of movement was the 14-day closure of the Gaza Strip following the murder of Helena Rapp, an Israeli girl from Bat Yam. Ha'aretz and Jerusalem Post reported on 9 June 1992 that new regulations that had been issued required all workers to report to the Civil Administration Labour Office in Gaza in order to receive a new card needed for admission into Israel. It was indicated further that no workers under 28 years of age would be allowed to enter Israel while employers would be obliged to provide work for at least 10 Palestinians. It is estimated that some 30,000 to 40,000 workers were affected by these measures. The age limit was subsequently reduced in stages.

"825. Restrictions have continued with regard to the freedom of expression. Jerusalem Post reported on 10 July 1992 that the High Court of Justice had upheld a decision of the Ministry of the Interior to refuse the issuing of a licence to a newspaper that was to be published in East Jerusalem called Al-Wafa, stating that there was a "strong basis" for suspecting that the paper would serve to promote the interests of organizations hostile to Israel. However, the Special Committee noted with interest the announcement that the newly elected Government of Israel was considering rescinding the law that stipulates that contacts with representatives of the PLO are illegal.

"826. A number of communications received by the Special Committee indicate that the freedom of religion has continued to be infringed during the period under consideration. Ha'aretz and Jerusalem Post reported on 19, 20 and 21 November 1991 that Israeli intelligence officers, special forces and border guards broke into the Islamic courthouse in East Jerusalem and seized a number of documents.

"827. From the evidence that has come before it, the Special Committee has noted that the freedom of education has continued to be restricted by the numerous closures of academic institutions, some of which have been closed since the beginning of the popular uprising. Some of those which have been allowed to reopen are subjected to periodic closures as a result of incidents that are not necessarily related to the actions of students but were alleged to have been provoked by Israeli security forces. It was reported that young boys were the particular targets in such actions and that students were on occasion beaten during such incidents when tear-gas canisters were also thrown. A recent incident concerned Al-Najah University in Nablus when the army sealed off the campus on 14 July 1992 on suspicion that there might be

armed fugitives on the premises. Approximately 2,000 persons, including students, professors, employees and several children, were blocked on the campus for several days and a curfew was imposed on the city, affecting almost 150,000 persons. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 15-17 July 1992) In addition to creating psychological stress, the long-term effects of closures and the systematic imposition of curfews in general has led to a dramatic decline in the once high academic standards and educational level of the Palestinian people. The restriction of the freedom of movement has also affected the freedom of persons to choose their place of study, as is the case of students from Gaza who need permission from the military governor of the West Bank in order to study there.

"828. The Special Committee was also informed of the severe shortages of classrooms and teaching material, including blackboards, and the restrictions placed on the importation of books, even when they were available in the libraries of Israeli universities. An additional difficulty faced by Palestinian students is the non-recognition by the Israeli authorities of diplomas obtained from universities that have been subjected to official closures, even when they are recognized internationally, on the basis of a curriculum that has been fulfilled outside the university premises. As a result, students are unable to find employment in Israel and in the occupied territories. Despite the efforts of the Israeli military authorities to insinuate that this is illegal, almost all of the universities "started off-campus teaching, in order to maintain a connection between the students and the staff and to maintain some semblance of a university".

"829. The policy of annexation and settlement pursued by the Israeli authorities has also affected the occupied Syrian Arab Golan. As has already been stated, the Jerusalem Post reported on 15 July 1992 that "security" settlements would be established in the Golan Heights and the Jordan Valley, despite the recent changes in settlement policy announced by the newly elected Government of Israel. Land is said to have recently been confiscated in the region of Buq'ata, where military outposts are said to have been established, thus preventing the shepherds from grazing their flocks. Witnesses who have testified before the Special Committee have spoken of the harassment to which they are subjected by soldiers when they try to communicate with their families through megaphones and binoculars across the demarcation line, alleging that soldiers turn their radios on at full volume and move their cars back and forth in order to create noise.

"830. The comprehensive picture drawn by the Special Committee on the basis of the evidence and information it has examined has led it to conclude that the situation of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms in the occupied territories has continued to be extremely serious in the course of the reporting period from 23 August 1991 to 26 August 1992. The physical and psychological stress the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the occupied territories consequently continue to endure remains a threat to international peace and security. On the basis of the evidence that has come before it, the Special Committee has noted that the peace process that began with the Madrid Conference has not yet had a significant effect on the overall enjoyment of

human rights in the occupied territories. It would therefore like to reiterate the need for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict through negotiations, taking into account the rights of all peoples in the area, including the national rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the occupied territories.

"831. The provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which is the principal international instrument in humanitarian law that applies to the occupied territories, have continued to be violated. The Israeli occupation forces have also continued to disregard the relevant provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as numerous resolutions relative to the situation of civilians in the occupied territories that have been adopted by various United Nations organs, in particular, those adopted by the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights, in addition to relevant resolutions adopted by UNESCO, WHO and ILO.

"832. In the meantime, and in view of the gravity of the situation, the Special Committee wishes to recommend once more the implementation of urgent measures that would safeguard the basic human rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs in the occupied territories. Such measures could include the following:

"(a) The full application, by Israel, of the relevant provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which remains the main international instrument in humanitarian law that applies to the occupied territories, and whose applicability to those territories has repeatedly been reaffirmed by the Security Council, the General Assembly and other relevant organs of the United Nations;

"(b) The full compliance with all resolutions pertinent to the question of Palestine as adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly, as well as other relevant resolutions adopted by UNESCO, WHO and ILO;

"(c) The creation of conditions of confidence and security conducive to promoting respect for human rights;

"(d) The full cooperation of the Israeli authorities with the International Committee of the Red Cross in order to protect detained persons, in particular by ensuring full access of its representatives to such persons;

"(e) The full support, by Member States, of the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross in the occupied territories, and positive response by Member States to any appeals for additional assistance, including funds to finance the extra activities required by the unprecedented increase in the number of detained persons;

"(f) The full support, by Member States, of UNRWA activities in the occupied territories in order to enable UNRWA to maintain and improve the general assistance provided to the refugee population;

"(g) The unrestricted cooperation of the Israeli authorities with UNRWA representatives and full respect by the Israeli authorities of the privileges and immunities that the Agency enjoys as an international body providing humanitarian services to Palestinian refugees in the occupied territories.

"833. The Special Committee hopes that in the ongoing negotiations the situation of human rights would take centre stage in the debate conducive to the building of confidence and mutual respect out of which a more favourable climate would emerge so as to ensure respect for human rights."

III. INVITATION EXTENDED TO THE UNITED NATIONS TO ATTEND, AS PARTICIPANT, WORKING GROUPS ON MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL ISSUES

On 23 October 1992, the following statement was issued by the spokesman for the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali:

"In the presence of the Permanent Representatives of the Russian Federation and the United States, which are the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace negotiations, the Permanent Representatives of Canada, France and the Netherlands yesterday delivered to the Secretary-General invitations to the United Nations to attend as a full extra-regional participant three Working Groups on Middle East regional issues. The Secretary-General will be represented at the Working Group on Environment, scheduled to take place at the Hague on 26-27 October, and at the Working Group on Economic and Regional Development, scheduled to take place in Paris on 29-30 October, by Mr. James O.C. Jonah, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. Mr. Jonah will be assisted by representatives of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The composition of the United Nations delegation to the Working Group on Refugees, to be held in Ottawa from 11 to 12 November, will be announced in due course."(see SG/1967)

IV. UNRWA COMMISSIONER-GENERAL REPORTS TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The annual report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA (covering the period 1 July 1991-30 June 1992) contains the following information of particular interest with regard to the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory(see A/47/13, paras. 1 to 14 and 22 to 23):

"1. It is to be hoped that the year under review will be remembered as the one in which moves began towards a settlement of the Palestine question, and indeed the broader Middle East conflict. The historic meeting at Madrid in October 1991, attended by Israel, the Arab States and a Palestinian delegation, was followed by further meetings in Washington and by multilateral discussions on a number of issues, including the refugee question, held at Ottawa in May 1992. At the time of writing, it was anticipated that the bilateral discussions would shortly resume in Washington. While the talks had yet to yield concrete results, their very continuation gave cause for optimism, a feeling which was bolstered by the election in June of a new Israeli Government which declared itself committed to advancing the peace process at an accelerated pace.

"2. In sharp contrast to the optimism created by the opening of the peace talks, the situation in the occupied territory of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip remained critical, since no significant relaxation in the traditional pattern of Israeli occupation policies occurred. In general, tension remained high for several reasons. The lack of correlation between positive developments at the political and diplomatic levels, and events affecting the daily life of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, were a cause for concern. Conditions in the refugee camps, especially in Gaza, were appalling for many of the inhabitants. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) repeatedly emphasized the need for peace negotiations at the international level to be accompanied by confidence-building measures affecting the daily life of the Palestinians in the occupied territory. Regrettably, there was little indication of any such measures by the end of the reporting period, although positive developments included the re-opening of Al-Najah and Bir Zeit universities, which meant that all universities in the occupied territory were once again functioning, and the holding of elections for chambers of commerce and other local bodies.

"3. Indeed, the Israeli authorities continued to apply harsh measures against the civilian population, including collective punishment such as curfews, punitive demolition and sealing of houses and shelters, expropriation of land and uprooting of thousands of trees. The night curfew, applied to the entire Gaza Strip almost continuously since the beginning of the intifadah, had long since become a permanent feature. By the end of the reporting period, it was estimated that approximately 12,700 residents of the occupied territory were in detention, with some 5,200 held in prisons and 7,500 in military detention centres. About 8,500 of those detainees were held in Megiddo prison and Ketziot detention centre, both outside the occupied territory, in violation of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949. Also in violation of the Convention was the practice of deportation. Although no deportations were carried out during the year under review, in the period since the beginning of the intifadah the Israeli authorities had deported 66 persons, including four UNRWA staff members. In January 1992, 12 Palestinians, including one UNRWA staff member, were served with deportation orders. A military appeals committee later rescinded the order against one of the 12. As on similar previous occasions, UNRWA protested against the proposed deportations.

"4. When faced with disturbances, the security forces frequently resorted to use of lethal force. Between 1 July 1991 and 30 June 1992, 121 Palestinians were killed in clashes with the Israeli security forces in the occupied territory. An additional 5,500 sought emergency medical attention in local hospitals and UNRWA health centres, suffering from beatings, tear gas inhalation and rubber bullet or live ammunition wounds (see table 12). Those figures, while disturbing, were the lowest since the outbreak of the intifadah in December 1987. Nevertheless, while the day-to-day level of confrontations was noticeably lower, the fear remained that socio-economic deterioration could combine with frustration at the lack of concrete progress in the peace process to cause the situation to explode into violence. That was particularly so in the Gaza Strip, where the potential for serious large-scale unrest became increasingly evident towards the end of the reporting period. On 1 April, Israeli soldiers in two jeeps sped into the market area of Rafah in the south of the Gaza Strip following the throwing of a hand grenade at a border police post. A petrol bomb and stones were thrown at the vehicles, whereupon the soldiers fired into the crowd, killing four Palestinians and wounding 70 others.

"5. During the reporting period, the Israeli security forces made increasing use of undercover units. Those units, which had existed since the early months of the intifadah, but were publicly acknowledged only in June 1991, entered towns, villages and refugee camps, usually in confiscated cars with local licence plates and in civilian, often Arab, dress, seeking to apprehend wanted persons. Many times, the activities of undercover units ended in the death by shooting of Palestinians. Between February and May 1992 alone, out of a total of 54 Palestinians killed in the occupied territory, 21 were killed by Israeli military personnel operating under cover. On a number of occasions, it was reported that Palestinians had been shot fleeing, or posing no threat to the safety of the security forces, or had been gunned down without warning. This led to assertions from Palestinian and international human rights groups that the undercover units were engaging in summary executions, a charge which was strenuously denied by the Israeli authorities.

"6. Within the Palestinian community, the killing of alleged collaborators continued during the period under review in spite of calls by many in the Palestinian leadership for such activity to be curtailed. A total of 64 were killed in Gaza and 63 in the West Bank. Among this number were two UNRWA staff members. On 11 May 1992, four masked men entered the boys' preparatory school at Deir el-Balah in the Gaza Strip and shot a teacher in full view of a class of 43 pupils. The teacher was transferred to a local hospital where he died. UNRWA strongly condemned this action and the following day closed all of its schools in the Deir el-Balah area.

"7. During the reporting period, loss of earnings and remittances from the Persian Gulf, reduction of domestic and export revenue and increased security measures combined to weaken further the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza. The number of Palestinians crossing each day to work in Israel fluctuated throughout the year. On occasion, all Palestinians were excluded from Israel by the authorities, who invoked security considerations. Inhabitants of the Gaza Strip tended to be the worst affected. The complete closure of the Strip from 24 May to 9 June 1992 was the longest since the end of the Gulf war. By the end of the reporting period, an estimated 25,000-27,000 workers from Gaza were crossing into Israel on a daily basis.

Those numbers fell far below pre-Gulf war, let alone pre-intifadah levels. Further, an estimated 10,000 persons in the West Bank alone, generally Palestinians who had spent some time in detention, were issued with special green identity cards, which effectively banned their entry to East Jerusalem and restricted their movement in the occupied territory itself. Moreover, in view of the large number of recent immigrants to Israel and the high level of unemployment in the country, it seemed unlikely that levels of Palestinian employment in Israel would rise significantly in the foreseeable future. The consequences of the situation for Palestinian employment and levels of income were serious. The ailing local economies of the West Bank and Gaza were unable to absorb even a fraction of the workers who lost jobs in Israel. In addition to providing material assistance to the most needy, UNRWA attempted to address some of the resulting problems through its income-generating and job-creation programme.

"8. The Agency proceeded with plans to build a 232-bed general hospital in the Gaza Strip, the construction costs of which were pledged by the European Community. It was hoped that the foundation stone would be laid towards the end of 1992. In addition to addressing urgent medical needs, the hospital project would provide more than 400 jobs in the construction phase, additional jobs during the installation and finishing phase, and more than 500 once in operation.

"9. It should be emphasized that under the prevailing circumstances it was extremely difficult to take effective remedial measures to address the socio-economic problems of the occupied territory. The stringent controls and restrictions applied by the occupation authorities over economic activities rendered almost any development initiatives, investment or trade highly problematic. More than 50 per cent of the land in the West Bank and 40 per cent in Gaza was reserved for Israeli military or civilian use and a series of military orders and planning regulations restricted Palestinian use of the remaining area. Severe limitations on water resources affected Palestinian agriculture, which had a total fixed quota of 90-100 million cubic metres per year in the West Bank while Israeli settlers received, per capita, at least twice the amount consumed by the Palestinians. Israel's announced measures to help the economy were not seen as producing concrete results.

"10. High rates of taxation also hampered economic initiatives. In the period since 1967, taxation had increased ahead of the ability of most Palestinians to pay. Israeli settlers living in the occupied territory paid lower taxes than Palestinians, and received other generous subsidies. On the basis of a case brought by a group of Palestinian merchants in the West Bank, the Israeli Supreme Court ordered the Government to explain why it charged Palestinians twice as much tax as it charged Israelis and why there was no explanation as to how the revenue was disposed of. Taxation or high fees also acted as a disincentive to the export of produce, particularly fruit, to Europe. Other obstacles to economic development in the occupied territory included the absence of a functioning credit system, stringent security checks and restrictions on movement. The pass system described in the previous report remained in force, with male Palestinians between the ages of 16 and 60 from the West Bank and Gaza requiring a travel pass to enter Israel or East Jerusalem. Given the size of greater Jerusalem, which had been expanded threefold since the beginning of the occupation, the effect of the pass system was to isolate East Jerusalem and divide the occupied territory into four

areas: northern West Bank, East Jerusalem, southern West Bank and Gaza. Towards the end of the reporting period, travel between the occupied territory and Jordan became increasingly difficult, with a larger number of Palestinians than usual, many of them Gulf returnees, wishing to visit relatives in the occupied territory or to renew their residence permits before expiry. The problem was compounded by the temporary closure for repairs of the Damiya bridge and the reduction by the Israeli authorities of the number of Palestinians per day permitted to cross the Allenby bridge.

"11. An issue related to bridge crossings was that of family reunification. A census carried out by the Israeli authorities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in the immediate aftermath of the 1967 war became the basis for the designation of the right of residence in the occupied territory. The substantial numbers of persons who had fled the occupied territory in the course of the 1967 war (including approximately 200,000 persons from the West Bank alone, of whom some 150,000 were refugees registered with UNRWA), and others who later wished to obtain residence in the occupied territory, could thereafter do so only by applying to the Israeli authorities for family reunification. A total of approximately 120,000 families were affected but only about 13,500 of an estimated 88,000 applicants between 1967 and 1989 had been successful in this regard. Approximately 12,000 displaced registered refugees were known by UNRWA to have returned to the occupied territory since June 1967. A particularly acute problem had in recent years arisen in the case of marriages entered into by West Bank residents with women, mainly from Jordan, who had applied for West Bank residence and were permitted to live there only on short-term renewable visitor permits. Deportations carried out by the Israeli military authorities of those women and their children, who were also not eligible for resident status in the occupied territory, created a climate of considerable uncertainty for newly-wed and prospective couples, who continued to remain subject to military administrative decisions, with little scope for legal recourse.

"12. A worrying development in the reporting period was the increasingly aggressive behaviour of Israeli civilian settlers towards the Palestinian population and sometimes also towards UNRWA staff and premises. A particularly serious incident took place on 27 May 1992. Following the killing of an Israeli settler by a Palestinian near Deir el-Balah in the Gaza Strip, a large crowd of settlers stoned a nearby UNRWA elementary school where more than 200 children aged between 7 and 11 years were taking examinations. Some 30 settlers entered the school compound, smashing property and causing considerable alarm among the children trapped inside the school. UNRWA staff present showed great courage in ensuring the safety of the children. Israeli military personnel eventually removed the settlers from the school premises and UNRWA staff were able to evacuate the children and teachers. The settlers destroyed nearby Palestinian property and crops, both during the incident and in the course of the subsequent two-week closure of the Strip. Settlers also ransacked an UNRWA warehouse, causing approximately $37,000 worth of damage.

"13. In addition to its regular activities in the occupied territory, UNRWA ran, for the fifth successive year, a programme of extraordinary measures to alleviate the difficulties experienced by the refugee community in the context of the intifadah and Israeli response. Those measures included the refugee affairs officer programme, a legal assistance scheme, emergency food distribution, cash grants to families in distress and a variety of emergency

health services, including increased subsidization of the cost of hospitalization.

"14. I cannot leave the subject of the occupied territory without emphasizing once again the difficulties faced by the Agency in operating there. I was concerned in particular about the safety of staff, both area and international, who faced frequent harassment by the Israeli security forces and, from time to time, threats and attacks by some elements in the Palestinian population. Area staff members were frequently arrested and detained, often without charge or trial. The Agency made repeated protests to the Israeli authorities over harassment of staff. Violation of UNRWA premises by the Israeli security forces, and misuse of those premises by certain local elements, also remained serious problems. Those matters are taken up in detail in chapter VII of the present report.

"22. In 1991/92, UNRWA provided assistance to 2.6 million registered Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Elementary and preparatory education was provided to 374,000 pupils in 636 schools, and health services were delivered through a network of 117 health points. Other Agency installations included 65 women's programme centres and 14 community rehabilitation centres for the disabled. In the event of the peace process leading to an interim period of self-government in the occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNRWA services would continue to be required. Indeed, it appeared that the Palestinian community would wish Agency services to continue and perhaps even expand during an interim period. The Agency would also offer Palestinian administrators cooperation in the planning of programmes in those sectors in which the Agency functioned and consolidate and begin to hand over to the emerging Palestinian institutions the programmes and facilities through which UNRWA had delivered services for more than 40 years. This would include close to 20,000 Palestinian staff and a vast network of health centres, dental clinics, maternal and child health centres, laboratories, elementary and preparatory schools, training centres, women's programme centres and all the related infrastructure. Of course, the scope of the Agency's role would be determined by the wishes of the parties concerned, particularly the Palestinians, since they would have to inform UNRWA how much and what kind of assistance they required. Moreover, any change in the direction of self-government would necessitate a much larger United Nations involvement in social and economic development. Close coordination within the United Nations system would be essential to ensure coherent and efficient assistance.

"23. The concluding paragraph of the introduction to the 1989/90 annual report referred to a "time of continuing political stalemate" while the corresponding paragraph last year was somewhat more optimistic in noting that "hopes remained alive that a peace conference would be convened later in the year". That peace conference was indeed convened and, at the end of another reporting period, we all look ahead with hope and optimism to the achievement of positive results. However, until the day arrives when the services of UNRWA are no longer required, I close by appealing once again to the international community to ensure that the Agency is supplied with the resources and moral support it must have if it is to carry out the will of the General Assembly.

V. FIFTH EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS, HELD AT ISTANBUL ON 17 AND 18 JUNE 1992, ADOPTS RESOLUTION ON THE CAUSE OF PALESTINE

"2/5-Ex. The cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the Arab-Israeli conflict

"The Fifth Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, on 16 and 17 Dhul Hijjah, A.H. 1412 (17 and 18 June 1992),

"Having considered with satisfaction the report of the Secretary-General on the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and the Arab-Israeli conflict in document No. EOICFM/5-92/D.2,

"Proceeding from the principles and objectives of the Charter of the Organization of the Islamic Conference,

"Pursuant to the resolutions of Islamic Summit and Foreign Ministers Conferences on the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and the Arab-Israeli conflict,

"Considering that Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories, its annexation of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the Syrian Golan, its denial of the inalienable national and political rights of the Palestinian people, constitute a flagrant violation of international legality, the principles of international law, and the United Nations Charter and relevant United Nations resolutions,

"Recalling the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Security Council on the situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif,

"Proceeding from the United Nations resolutions and particularly Security Council resolution 681 (1990) which confirms the applicability of all provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, concluded on 12 August 1949, to the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif,

"Expressing deep concern over the dangerous situation in the Palestinian territories, which results from continued Israeli occupation; arbitrary practices and repressive measures as well as from Israel's continued confiscation of land and properties, establishment of colonialist settlements; escalation of the policy of deportation of Palestinians, destruction of houses, uprooting of trees, imposition of collective punishment on local

populations, blockade of Palestinian cities, villages and camps, and desecration of Islamic and Christian Holy Shrines,

"Expressing deep concern over the ongoing transfer of Jews to the occupied territories and their settlement there, and over Israel's continuing establishment and expansion of colonialist settlements in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories,

"Also expressing deep concern at the continued Israeli acts of aggression on southern Lebanon and affirming that Israeli expansionist policies, practices and designs are not only aimed at the Arab front-line States but also at destabilizing the Islamic countries, which constitutes a threat to international peace and security,

"Following with great interest the ongoing peaceful efforts aimed at achieving a just and comprehensive solution of the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), the formula of land for peace and the legitimate and inalienable national and political rights of the Palestinian people,

"Stressing the importance of the role of the United Nations in the efforts made to reach a just and comprehensive political settlement of the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict,

"1. Recalls all the resolutions of Islamic Conferences relating to the cause of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict; expresses its pride in the blessed intifadah of the Palestinian people, and calls upon all member States to continue to enhance their solidarity with, and support of, the just and legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people for putting an end to Israeli occupation and attaining all their objectives of freedom and independence;

"2. Reaffirms that the cause of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict are an indivisible whole in terms of treatment and settlement; that the solution cannot be fragmented or made to favour only some parties to the conflict or cover some causes of the conflict, to the exclusion of others; and that peace cannot prevail in the region if it does not involve all parties concerned, including the Palestinian party whose cause is the prime cause of all Muslims and the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict;

"3. Reaffirms the legitimacy of the struggle waged by the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, their sole legitimate representative, to recover their land and exercise their inalienable national rights, including their rights of return, and their right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, on their national soil, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital;

"4. Affirms that just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East region can only be established through Israel's total and unconditional withdrawal from all the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967;

"5. Expresses its support for the effort which led to the convening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East in Madrid, aimed at finding a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli conflict; deplores Israel's failure to respond to the Palestinian peace initiative which was announced by the Palestine National Council at its nineteenth session and which represented the genuine Palestinian and Arab desire to bring about a just and comprehensive peace; calls upon the co-sponsors of the Conference to exert their efforts so as to save the ongoing negotiations from failure as a result of Israel's intransigence, for such a failure would adversely affect international peace and security; and considers that the success of these negotiations hinges on the fulfilment of the following principles and elements:

First: Their adherence to international legality and United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) as well as to the international and Arab understanding of the two resolutions which is based on the impermissibility of occupation of other people's territories by force and secures total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif, the Syrian Golan and the occupied Jordanian territories and is also based on the formula of land for peace and on the legitimate national and political rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination as a sine qua non to freedom and national independence;

Second: That occupied Al-Quds is an integral part of the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, to which apply the provisions, applicable to all occupied territories, of the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly and that Al-Quds Al-Sharif is the core of the Palestinian cause which, in turn, is the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict and as such cannot be left out of the current peace negotiations;

Third: Cessation of the establishment of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the Syrian Golan, providing international guarantees to that effect and for the dismantling of existing settlements as they are illegal according to the resolutions of international legality, including Security Council resolution 465 (1980);

Fourth: Comprehensive solution so that it may cover all fronts up to the final comprehensive solution, pursuant to the resolutions of international legality; ensuring that any interim arrangements shall include the right of the Palestinian people to establish their control over all their land, water and other natural resources, as well as all political and economic affairs; and solve the Palestinian refugees problem in accordance with United Nations resolutions, in particular

General Assembly resolution 194 (III) and Security Council resolution 237 (1967);

Fifth: Necessity of ensuring international protection for the Palestinian people in the occupied territories; implementing the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 as well as the Hague Accord of 1907 and of putting an end to all Israeli terrorist and repressive practices against the Palestinian people and Palestinian prisoners in the occupied Palestinian territories; to the confiscation of Islamic and Christian property and waqfs and attempts to alter their characteristics, to the continued violation of Holy Shrines; and to the excavations endangering these sacred monuments;

"6. Draws the attention of international public opinion and the Security Council to the danger in Israel's conduct as if it was exempted from abiding by the international law and from adherence to the criteria of international legality and calls upon the international community to force Israel to put an end to its violations; to respect the principles of international legality and to implement the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council without any delay;

"7. Strongly condemns repressive Israeli practices and measures against the Palestinian population; condemns the blockade imposed by Israeli occupation authorities on the Gaza Strip and other Palestinian cities; and appeals to all States to respond to the request of the United Nations Secretary-General to work for the implementation of Security Council resolution 681 (1990) calling for a meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 so as to take the necessary measures to provide international protection for the Palestinian people in the occupied territories;

"8. Strongly condemns the Israeli expansionist settlement policy and considers all settlements established or to be established by Israel in Al-Quds Al-Sharif, in the other occupied Palestinian territories, and in the Syrian Golan illegal by the standards of international legality. It appeals to all States to refrain from taking any measures aimed at facilitating settlement operations in the occupied territories;

"9. Calls on all States to refrain from dealing with Israeli occupation authorities in a way that may be construed by them as a tacit recognition of the de facto situation imposed by Israel when it declared Al-Quds its capital. It recalls in this respect Security Council resolutions 465 (1980), 476 (1980) and 478 (1980) annulling Israeli measures pertaining to Al-Quds Al-Sharif. It affirms that all legislative, administrative and settlement measures aimed at changing the legal status of the Holy City are null and void, have no legal implications whatsoever, and are contrary to the international conventions, charters and norms;

"10. Strongly condemns the policy of immigration and settlement of Jews in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the Syrian Golan, since 1967;

"11. Strongly condemns the continued Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, Israel's continued aggressions and its repressive military action against the Lebanese population and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. It requests the United Nations Security Council to put an immediate end to these aggressions and demands immediate, total and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from the Lebanese territory; it reaffirms its commitment to the independence, sovereignty and integrity of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders. It also stresses the need for implementing Security Council resolutions on Lebanon, especially resolution 425 (1978). It expresses its appreciation of the accomplishments of the Supreme Tripartite Arab Committee and calls on the international community to contribute to the International Fund for the Reconstruction of Lebanon;

"12. Strongly condemns Israel for its policy of non-compliance with Security Council resolution 497 (1981); for imposing its jurisdiction, laws and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan; for pursuing policies and practices of annexation, of establishing settlements, confiscating land, diverting water resources and imposing Israeli nationality on Syrian citizens; and considers all these measures as null and void, and a violation of the norms and principles of international law relating to occupation and war, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949;

"13. Requests the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to continue and strengthen contacts and coordination between the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, the non-aligned movement, and the United Nations and the specialized agencies, on the cause of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict;

"14. Calls on the international community to put pressure on Israel to implement the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which call for placing all nuclear installations under the IAEA system of safeguards and to respond to current efforts and initiatives aimed at creating a nuclear-weapon and mass-destruction weapon-free zone in the Middle East region. It calls upon member States to continue their cooperation within the framework of the United Nations, IAEA and related international forums with the aim of ensuring Israel's compliance with international resolutions, subjection of all its nuclear facilities to international inspection and presentation of a full report on its stockpile of nuclear materials to the Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency;

"15. Pays tribute to the continued efforts of the Al-Quds Committee under the chairmanship of His Majesty King Hassan II, Sovereign of the Kingdom of Morocco, and reaffirms all the recommendations made at the fourteenth session of the Committee;

"16. Calls upon member States to honour their commitment to cover the approved budgets of all Al-Quds funds and its waqf, set at one hundred million dollars each, and also calls on member States to pay their contributions and to continue the campaign for the collection of donations at both popular and official levels in favour of Al-Quds funds and its waqf;

"17. Expresses its appreciation to the States of the European Community, China, Japan, the Vatican, the United Nations, the non-aligned movement, the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and all the peoples and peace-loving forces for their support of the Palestinian cause in the international forums and their assistance to the struggle of the Palestinian people and their blessed intifadah;

"18. Requests the Secretary-General to follow up the implementation of this resolution and to submit a report thereon to the next Summit Conference." (see A/47/592-S/24718)

VI. INTERNATIONAL ENCOUNTER FOR EUROPEAN JOURNALISTS ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE HELD AT LISBON ON 16 AND 17 SEPTEMBER 1992

The United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI), in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Portugal and the Lisbon newspaper Público, sponsored an International Encounter for European Journalists on the Question of Palestine at Lisbon, Portugal, on 16 and 17 September 1992. The Encounter was moderated by the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, Giorgio Giacomelli, and coordinated by Mustapha Tlili, Chief of the Anti-Apartheid, Decolonization ad Palestine Programmes Section of DPI. It was opened by Duarte Ivo Cruz, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Portugal.

The Encounter was part of DPI's special information programme on the question of Palestine, mandated by General Assembly resolution 46/74 C of 11 December 1991.

The Lisbon meeting was designed to build on the success of a similar United Nations-sponsored Encounter convened in Helsinki in June 1991. United Nations publication, Prospects for Peace in the Middle East: An Israeli-Palestinian Dialogue (Sales No. E.92.I.25) provides an account of the proceedings. The objective at Lisbon was to review progress achieved in the current peace process, launched on 30 October 1991 at Madrid, discuss various scenarios for peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and focus on Europe's contribution to such an outcome.

Panellists

There were nine panellists: Jamil Hilal, Director of the Information Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Member of the Palestine National Council (PNC); Hisham Mustapha, Department of Arab and International Affairs of the PLO and Member of the PNC; Ziad Abu Zayyad, Adviser to the Palestinian Negotiating Team; Avraham Burg, Member of the Knesset, Israel; Naomi Chazan, Member of the Knesset, Israel; Walid Al-Sa'adi, Personal Representative of H.R.H. Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan; Hans Stercken, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Bundestag, Germany; Francisco Henriques da Silva, Director for Middle East and Maghreb Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Portugal; and William B. Quandt, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.

Media

The Encounter brought together a total of 52 media participants, including columnists, senior editors and editorial writers representing the following news organizations: Der Standard, ORF (Austria), De Standaard, IPS (Belgium); Politiken, Weekendavisen (Denmark); Helsingin Sanomat, Hufvudstadsbladet (Finland); Agence France Presse (AFP), Le Figaro, Le Monde, Le Nouvel Observateur (France); Deutschlandfunk, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Vereinte Nationen (Germany); Kathimerini, MEGA Channel TV (Greece); Osservatore Romano (Holy See); The Irish Times (Ireland); Davar, Hadashot, Maariv, Jerusalem Post, Yediot Aharanot (Israel); Famiglia Cristiana, Il Giornale, La Stampa (Italy); Al Fajr, Al Ouds, Al-Sha'ab, An-Nahar, Arab Media Centre (AMC), Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre (JMCC) (Jerusalem); Luxemburger Wort (Luxembourg); ANP (Algemeen Nederlands Persbureau), De Volkskrant, NRC Handelsblad (the Netherlands); Aftenposten (Norway); CMR, Diario de Noticias, Jornal de Noticias, O Jornal, Público, TSF (Portugal); El Mundo (Spain); Svenska Dagbladet (Sweden); La Liberté, Neue Zürcher Zeitung (Switzerland); The European, Financial Times, The Guardian, and The Independent (United Kingdom).

VII. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION

During the course of October, the following information was received by the Division for Palestinian Rights:

1. ICCP Newsletter No. 45, special issue on the Ninth United Nations International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine. Available from: the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, 150 route de Ferney, Case postale 2100, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland.

2. Arab/American Issues, monthly publication of the Arab/American Institute. Available from: 918 16th Street NW, Suite 601, Washington, D.C., 20006, United States of America.

3. Peace Conference Information Project, publication issued as a service by the International Coordinating Committee on Palestine and the North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on Palestine (NACC). Available from: ICCP, P.O. Box 2100, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland.

4. Une Terre Deux Peuples, publication of the Association pour l'union entre les peuples juif et palestinien. Available from: Case postale 43, 1247 Anières, Geneva, Switzerland.

5. Gulf Newsletter, publication of the Gulf Information Project, established by the British Refugee Council and supported by British NGOs. Available from: Ms. Sarah Brown, 3 Bondway, London SW8 ISJ, United Kingdom.

6. Middle East International, bi-weekly publication, available from: P.O. Box 53365, Temple Heights Station, Washington, D.C., 20009, United States of America.

7. SAMID, publication of Mandela Institute for Political Prisoners. Available from: P.O. Box 19543, Jerusalem.

8. Another Viewpoint, commentary available from: AVP, 604 Barbera Place, Davis, California 95616, United States of America.

9. The Other Front, weekly bulletin on developments in Israeli society, available from: The Alternative Information Centre, P.O Box 24278., Jerusalem.

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UNITED NATIONS

DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

November 1992

Volume XV, Bulletin No. 11

CONTENTS

		Page
I.	INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE	1
II.	RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY	2
III.	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION	6

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I. INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

On 30 November 1992, the International Day of Solidarity was observed at United Nations Headquarters, New York, and at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna, as well as in several other cities, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977.

All States Members of the United Nations, specialized agencies and observers were invited to attend the solemn meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people.

At that meeting, statements were made by: Kéba Birane Cissé (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee; Stoyan Ganev (Bulgaria), President of the General Assembly; the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali; and, the President of the Security Council for the month of November, André Erdös (Hungary).

The Observer of Palestine, Nasser Al-Kidwa, read out a message from Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Also, Stanley Kalpagé (Sri Lanka) made a statement as Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories.

In addition, the representative of Indonesia, Nugroho Wisnumurti, read out a message from President Soeharto in his capacity as Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. A further message was delivered by Hikmet Cetin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey and Chairman of the Twentieth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers.

The observer for the League of Arab States, Mahmood Aboul-Nasr, read out a message from its Secretary-General, Ahmed Esmat Meguid. Further statements were made by Hasan Ali Hussain Al-Ni'Mah (Qatar), speaking as Chairman of the Group of Arab States for the month of December 1992, and Colleen McGuire, representative of the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine.

Concluding statements were made by the Chairman of the Committee and Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the Political Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Messages to commemorate the occasion were received from 21 heads of State, 12 heads of Government and 11 Foreign Ministers, as well as the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania and

UNESCO. Still further messages were received from 11 non-governmental organizations active on the question of Palestine.

All statements and messages received will be published *in extenso* in a special bulletin prepared by the Division for Palestinian Rights.

In further commemoration of the International Day, the Committee arranged the screening of a series of films during the week beginning 30 November in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium.

At the request of the Committee, and also in commemoration of the International Day, the Office of the Permanent Observer for Palestine to the United Nations presented an exhibit in cooperation with the Committee, which was displayed in the Public Lobby at United Nations Headquarters from 30 November to 4 December 1992.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Committee met on 5 November 1992, at which time it adopted its report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. The report contained the following recommendations:

> "The year 1992 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the occupation by Israel of the Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Jerusalem. While welcoming the peace process initiated at Madrid in October 1991 and expressing the hope that it will lead to substantive results, the Committee draws once again the attention of the international community to the fact that the occupation continues, buttressed by harsh and repressive measures, causing serious suffering and hardship among Palestinians and an unending cycle of violence in the region. The Committee considers that the permanence of occupation and the denial of Palestinian rights, in particular the right to self-determination, are the major obstacles to the attainment of peace.
>
> "The Committee expresses its continued and full support for the *intifadah*, the courageous struggle of the Palestinian people, to end Israeli occupation and implement the proclamation of independence of November 1988. Through

the intifadah, the Palestinian people has clearly expressed its determination to bring about the exercise of its inalienable national rights and has affirmed that the Palestine Liberation Organization is its sole legitimate representative. The Committee reaffirms the international consensus that the attainment and exercise of Palestinian rights, in accordance with United Nations resolutions, are indispensable for the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the core of which is the question of Palestine. The Committee calls once again upon the international community as a whole to intensify further its efforts to bring about this essential objective.

"The Committee recalls that the Peace Conference on the Middle East convened under the co-sponsorship of the United States and the former Soviet Union has the support of all the parties and has for its frame of reference Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the principle of land for peace. The Committee expresses its earnest hope that this process will bring about a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement to the question of Palestine based on internationally recognized principles and United Nations resolutions. The Committee stresses the essential need for an active role by the United Nations, the Security Council and the Secretary-General, for a successful outcome of the peace process.

"The Committee reaffirms that the United Nations has a permanent responsibility with respect to the question of Palestine until the question is resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy.

"The Committee recalls that an international consensus has been reached over the years on the essential principles for the achievement of comprehensive peace, as recommended initially by the Committee (see annex I) and subsequently elaborated by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held at Geneva in 1983, and relevant General Assembly resolutions, the latest of which was resolution 46/75. The Committee reaffirms that these principles include the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Jerusalem; respect for the right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized boundaries; and the recognition and exercise of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination.

"The Committee considers that, in the recent elections, a majority of the Israeli public has voted for peace and expresses the earnest hope that the new Israeli Government will recognize and respect the national aspirations and rights of the Palestinian people, in particular the right to self-determination, and institute radical changes in Israel's policies in favour of peace. The Committee urges the Government to take immediate measures for the restoration of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of Palestinians living under occupation, in accordance with Israel's obligations under international law. The Committee notes with concern reports from various sources that initial goodwill statements and measures by the new Government have failed to improve the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, and have been followed by increased repression of demonstrations during the prisoners' hunger strike in October 1992. The Committee calls on the Government to act immediately to end extrajudicial killings, cease all land confiscation and settlement activities, release political prisoners, end deportations, administrative detention, ill-treatment and torture of prisoners, restore freedom of movement and other civil liberties, and repeal the military orders through which it controls every area of Palestinian daily life. The Committee calls once again on Israel to recognize the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War to the occupied Palestinian territory and to implement its provisions and those of the various human rights instruments to which it is a party. The Committee considers that the fact that a peace process is under way does not detract in any way from Israel's obligations in this regard.

"Pending progress towards a political settlement, the Committee considers it is of the utmost urgency that all necessary measures be taken to protect the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, and numerous resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. The Committee considers that it is now all the more urgent for the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention and for the United Nations system as a whole to take action to ensure that Israel abide by its obligations as the occupying Power, in accordance with Security Council resolution 681 (1990). The Committee draws attention in this regard to the relevant recommendations made by the participants in the North American Regional Seminar on the theme "Enforcing the Fourth Geneva Convention for ensuring the protection of the

Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem" (see annex IV).

"The Committee wishes to reaffirm that the United Nations has a duty and responsibility to render all assistance necessary to promote the social and economic development of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, in preparation for the full exercise of national sovereignty in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. The Committee accordingly reiterates its call upon the organizations of the United Nations system, as well as on Governments and on intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to sustain and increase their economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Mindful of the importance of this issue and of the need to increase its own efforts to promote international action, the Committee has decided to devote its 1993 Economic Seminar to the question of assistance to the Palestinian people in accordance with the proposal made by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 1992/58.

"The Committee notes with satisfaction the increased international support for the attainment of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine in accordance with international principles and United Nations resolutions in the year under review. The Committee believes that its programme of regional seminars, non-governmental organization meetings and other informational activities has played a valuable role in this process and it will continue to strive to achieve maximum effectiveness in the implementation of its mandate. The Committee will continue and intensify its efforts to ensure that those meetings provide a useful forum for promoting a constructive debate and a concrete and action-oriented analysis of the most important issues relating to the question of Palestine. The Committee once again extends an invitation to all Governments, including those of the United States of America and Israel, to participate in its work and in the events organized under its auspices.

"The Committee considers that the programme of research, studies and publications of the Division for Palestinian Rights is an essential resource for information, analysis and promotion of international action, and calls for its strengthening through the establishment of an adequately staffed and equipped computerized system." (see A/47/35, paras. 85 to 94)

III. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION

During the course of November, the following information was received by the Division for Palestinian Rights:

1. ICCP Newsletter No. 47, special issue on prisons, providing background information relating to the hunger strike of Palestinian political prisoners during September and October. Available from: the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, 150 route de Ferney, Case postale 2100, CH-1211, Geneva 2, Switzerland.

2. The Other Front, weekly bulletin on developments in Israeli society, available from: P.O. Box 19543, Jerusalem.

3. Middle East International, bi-weekly publication, available from: P.O. Box 53365, Temple Heights Station, Washington, D.C., 20009, United States of America.

4. Newsletter of the Middle East Justice Network, available from: P.O. Box 558, Cambridge, MA 02238, United States of America.

5. Israel and Palestine Political Report, available from: Magelan, Boite Postale 130, 75463 Paris CEDEX 10, France.

6. Palestine Solidarité, bi-weekly bulletin of l'Association Médicale Franco-Palestinienne, available from: 14 rue de Nanteuil, 75015 Paris, France.

7. Women for Women Political Prisoners, available from: P.O. Box 8537, Jerusalem 91083.

8. Another Viewpoint, commentary available from: AVP, 604 Barbera Place, Davis, California 95616, United States of America.

9. Une Terre, Deux Peuples, publication of the Association pour l'Union entre les peuples juif et palestinien, available from: C.P. 43, 1247 Anières, Geneva, Switzerland.

10. P.R.C.S. Newsletter, newsletter of the Palestine Red Crescent Society, available from: Information Department, P.O. Box 5386, Nicosia, Cyprus.

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